MONTANA COMMISSION ON
community serv</ce

PLANNING GRANTS
ADDENDUM to:
2010 AmeriCorps Application Instructions

Governors Office of Community Service
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Helena, MT 59620
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AmeriCorps*State Planning Grants

In conjunction with the 2010 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) announcement, the Montana Commission on Community Service is offering <u>planning grants</u> for the purpose of assisting organizations in developing an AmeriCorps Program.

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AmeriCorps*State Planning grants are for up to a one-year period. Towards the end of the planning period, planning grant recipients are expected to apply and compete for an AmeriCorps*State program grant. There is no guarantee that planning grant recipients will receive an AmeriCorps*State program grant.

Planning grants do not include any AmeriCorps member positions. During the planning period, you will define the roles and activities members will perform in the program.

Eligibility requirements
Information about eligibility requirements can be found in the ***2010 Notice of Funding Opportunity***. Additional information can also be found in the ***2010 AmeriCorps Application Instructions.***

Funds available
The Montana Commission on Community Service will consider funding no more than 4 Planning Grants up to $30,000 each. Applicants may use planning grant funds for staff time, planning meetings, travel to partner organizations, and other costs associated with planning and developing a proposed AmeriCorps program. Attendance at quarterly Commission meetings, trainings, and events will be requested.

AmeriCorps planning grants are only for costs directly related to planning activities, rather than general organizational expenses. The application instructions provide guidance on charging administrative costs to the grant.

Matching funds requirement
Applications are required to meet the minimum match requirement of 24% in cash or in-kind support. Additional match requirements can be found in the ***2010 Notice of Funding Opportunity***.

Selection process and criteria
The Planning Grant process is not designed as a "qualifying" round, but rather a method of developing strong AmeriCorps proposal and programs. Applicants are asked to address any issues raised by the grant reviewers and to work with Governor's Office of Community Service staff and/or technical assistance providers in developing a final AmeriCorps proposal.

In evaluating applications for funding, reviewers will assess program design, organizational capability, and cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. The weights assigned to each category and sub-category are listed in the chart below. Reviewers

will assess application narratives against these criteria and weight them accordingly. Please see the AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2522.420–2522.448, for additional detail regarding these criteria and what reviewers will assess in each category.

Each applicant must also complete the **Financial and Administrative Survey** form. Information from this form will be reviewed along with the information listed in the application.

Basic Selection Criteria: Categories, Sub-Categories, and Respective Weights

Category	Percentage	Sub-Categories and Weights
Program Design	50%	Rationale and Approach – 10%
		Member Outputs and Outcomes – 20%
		Community Outputs and Outcomes – 20%
Organizational Capability	25%	No sub-categories
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	25%	Cost-Effectiveness – 15%
		Budget Adequacy – 10%

Section 2522.450 of the AmeriCorps regulations addresses types of programs or program models that may receive special consideration in the selection process. Section 2522.455 addresses how you can find out about additional priorities governing the selection process. Section 2522.470 addresses other factors or information the Corporation may consider in making final decisions.

Submitting Your Application in eGrants
Your planning grant application consists of the following components. Please make sure to complete each one.
I. Applicant Info
II. Application Info
III. Narratives
IV. Performance Measures (Enter N/A)
V. Documents
VI. Budget
VII. Review and Submit
VIII. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Optional)

In eGrants, before Starting Section I, you will need to:
- Start a new Grant Application
- Select a Program Area (AmeriCorps)
- Select a NOFA

I. Applicant Info

In eGrants, complete the Applicant Info Section. This section is particularly important for Corporation data collection and evaluation. Please take the time to reflect your program activities accurately in this section.
- In the Program Info Section enter new.
- Enter your contact information into the fields that appear.
- Select a primary Program Model, and a secondary Program Model, if appropriate.
- Then select characteristics that fit your project under Program Design, Program Location, and Program Focus. Enter or select a Program Director and Program Website URL.

II. Application Info
Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Face sheet.

In the Application Info Section enter:
- Areas affected by your program.
- Enter requested project period start and end dates. You may not request a program start date before February 1st, 2010 for Planning grants.
- If you are delinquent on any federal debt.
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.
- State Single Point of Contact: Pre-filled No, this is not applicable.
- If you plan to request a waiver of the volunteer leveraging or match requirements.

III. Narratives
Please provide a narrative of no more than ten pages (approximately 40,000 characters) that addresses the following elements.

A. Rationale and Approach
Describe why you are applying for a planning grant and what you hope to achieve during the planning period.

Include the compelling need you plan to address and documentation of the need.

How you intend to involve a diverse group of participants in planning an AmeriCorps program to meet the identified need.

Describe what AmeriCorps members will be doing to meet the need, and the target communities you will serve. Provide a detailed description of your planning process and a timeline for planning activities.

Describe how you will use the planning period to develop your capacity to effectively manage an AmeriCorps operating program including:
- Establishing systems and processes for sound programmatic and fiscal oversight.

- Creating a process for selecting operating and service sites (if applicable) that will ensure the most appropriate and capable organizations are selected.
- Planning orientation and training for operating and service sites (if applicable).
- Planning orientation and training for AmeriCorps members.
- Ensuring you have the ability to provide or secure effective technical assistance.

B. Member Outcomes and Outputs (N/A)

C. Community Outputs and Outcomes (N/A)

D. Organizational Capability
Provide a brief history of your organization including the year it was established and your funding history with the Corporation, if applicable.

Describe your ability to successfully plan and implement an AmeriCorps program.

Unless your organization is new, describe your record of accomplishment.

Discuss your prior experience in the proposed area of programming and other examples of your organization's leadership in the community.

Describe your organization's management and staff structure and the role the board of directors, administrators, and staff members will play in the planning process.

Provide a list of all proposed agencies and organization to be involved in the planning, development and administration/management.

Special Circumstances:
In applying these criteria to each proposal, reviewers may also take into account the following circumstances of individual organizations:
- The age of your organization and its rate of growth; and whether your organization serves a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of philanthropic and corporate resources.

If you feel that any of these circumstances have an impact on your organizational capability that has not already been discussed, please describe it.

E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
Describe your plans to develop a cost-effective program including how you will develop diverse non-federal resources that will support your program implementation and sustainability.

Discuss the adequacy of your budget to support the planning process including your 24% or more commitments of match (cash and in-kind) you have for the planning process, and how you will secure any additional commitments you need for the planning grant.

F. Evaluation Summary or Plan
Enter N/A for Planning Grants.

G. Amendment Justification
Enter N/A. This field will be used if you are awarded a grant and need to amend it.

H. Clarification Information
Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period.

I. Continuation Update
Enter N/A for Planning Grants.

IV. Performance Measures
The Corporation does not require performance measures for planning grants. Please enter Service Categories, and then enter N/A or 0 in the fields for one aligned performance measure, which is required in order to submit.

A. Service Categories
In eGrants, the service categories are located in the Performance Measures Section. In this section you will select issue areas and service categories that describe your program activities.

First select an issue area, and then choose service categories from the pull down menu. When you have selected all applicable service categories, indicate which service category is the primary and which is the secondary in importance to your program. Only one service category can be indicated as the primary, and one as the secondary. See Attachment C for the list of Issue Areas and Service Categories.

V. Documents
No documents are required for Planning Grants.

VI. Budget
Please follow the Budget Instructions and Detailed Budget Instructions beginning on page 23 of the *2010 AmeriCorps Application Instructions* for Planning Grants, except for the exceptions listed below.

C.2. Member Travel
N/A for Planning Grants.
D. Equipment
N/A for Planning Grants.
E. Supplies
N/A for Planning Grants
G. 2. Member Training
N/A for Planning Grants.

H. Evaluation
N/A for Planning Grants.
Section II. Member Costs
N/A for Planning Grants.

VII. Review and Submit
Follow instructions on page 33 of the *2010 AmeriCorps Application Instructions*.
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VIII. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Optional)
Follow instructions on page 33 of the *2010 AmeriCorps Application Instructions*.